

Running Head: ADMINISTRATIVE COMPANY OFFICER POLICIES

Determining the Adequacy of Administrative and Supervisory Policies

For Company Officers of the Moorhead Fire Department

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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed\_\_\_\_\_

### Abstract

The Moorhead Fire Department had developed numerous policies in several different volumes over the course of two decades. Many were out dated, many conflicted, and many issues were simply not addressed. The problem was that the Moorhead Fire Department did not have comprehensive written policies to guide company officer behavior, resulting in inconsistent application of administrative and managerial procedures across shift boundaries. The purpose of this applied research project was to use descriptive research to determine if the current department policies adequately outline the expected administrative and supervisory performance behaviors for company officers and to make recommendations to address any deficiencies found in the current policies. A literature review was conducted to determine recommendations for company officer behavior and compare policies on other jurisdictions. Interviews were conducted and a questionnaire was used to determine the expectations of Moorhead officers and the adequacy of current policies. Five policies were identified as being deficient, resulting in company officer performance that needed improvement. Recommendations were made to establish new policies correlating to these deficiencies. It was further recommended to study additional potential policy deficiencies found in the study.

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## Determining the Adequacy of Administrative and Supervisory Policies

### For Company Officers of the Moorhead Fire Department

#### Introduction

The Moorhead (Minnesota) Fire Department was governed locally by a number of City and Fire Department policies. The policies had been written and revised by many different authors over a 20 year period. Several policy revision projects had been initiated during the last 13 years, although none of them had been completed. In the last four years several new policies had also been created. A majority of these policies had been written to provide direction to the shift commander, who were tasked with overseeing all operational resources of the department. Company officers, who were in charge of a single engine company, had been largely ignored in the process.

The problem was that the Moorhead Fire Department did not have comprehensive written policies to guide company officer behavior, resulting in inconsistent application of administrative and managerial procedures across shift boundaries.

The purpose of this applied research project was to determine if the current department policies adequately outlined the expected administrative and supervisory performance behaviors for company officers and make recommendations to address any deficiencies found in the current policies. Descriptive research was used to answer the following questions. a) What company officer administrative and supervisory behaviors are outlined by existing laws, regulations, standards and policies? b) What company officer administrative and supervisory behaviors are addressed by industry experts? c) What administrative and supervisory behaviors are expected of company officers by the Moorhead Fire Department? d) What perceived deficiencies exist in company officer

administrative and supervisory behavior and/or policies within the Moorhead Fire Department? The answers to these questions were then used to formulate a recommendation to resolve the problem.

### Background and Significance

The Moorhead Fire Department experienced a period of stable staffing from 1985 until 2008. The Fire Department operated out of two fire stations with a sworn staffing of 30. Three shifts of nine suppression employees worked rotating 24-hour shifts to provide continuous service. A lieutenant was in charge of the South Station and two firefighters worked as either a driver/operator or a firefighter on Engine 2. No unique classification of driver/operator existed, nor did permanent station assignments for firefighters; they rotated between both stations and multiple apparatus and seated positions over the course of their normal duties. An assistant chief was in charge of the entire shift, the Headquarters Station, and firefighters working that day on Engine 1 and Rescue 1. Three administrative staff also worked out of the Headquarters Station.

On the surface it would appear that the lieutenant would be in charge of almost all functions at the South Station and the assistant chief would be in charge of all functions at the Headquarters Station, with occasional oversight of the Lieutenant at the South Station, but this was not the case. In most cases, the department operated as if there was one overall supervisor who managed all eight of the individuals who worked on his or her shift. Most administrative and many of the supervisory functions were centralized and performed by the assistant chief. All incident reports, establishing of daily tasks, employee performance reviews, scheduling, and a host of other functions were performed solely by the assistant chief.

The assistant chief also performed most of the duties of a company officer at the Headquarters Station. He or she rode in the company officer seat of Engine 1, and directly supervised the operations of the crew of that apparatus at all incidents outside of structural fires. It is here that the first problems with the organizational structure became apparent. During fire suppression operations, the assistant chief would assume command of the incident from an exterior roving position, releasing the balance of his or her crew or crews to operate independently. The firefighters would determine amongst themselves who, if anyone, would take the lead position of their crew. Often this was done on the basis of seniority, actual fire suppression experience, or comfort level with that particular incident, but no formal process was ever put in place.

It was realized that a gap existed in supervision and accountability at hazardous incidents that required the establishment of an exterior incident commander. Establishing a separate company officer position for the crew of Engine 1 was selected as a solution to the problem, and a plan was made to place the assistant chief in a support vehicle (pickup) to respond to emergency incidents and establish a fixed exterior command. This plan was established in 2006 as a goal to be achieved when funding and support could be obtained from city administration.

In 2007 it was also determined that the lieutenant, not the assistant chief should complete all incident reports for the South Station. It was thought this would reduce our liability exposure by utilizing the actual personnel operating on the scene to personally fill out reports and would also result in increased accuracy and detail in incident reporting.

After the decision was made and lieutenants began completing their own reports, another problem was discovered. No formal policies existed to direct and guide employees through the process of incident reporting. Assistant chiefs have historically trained their replacements in an informal manner during the course of normal duties. This resulted in a vague standard that was subject to change, which varied from person to person, and contained no method of quality control or assurance.

This problem was compounded as a result of a Standard of Response document created in 2006 (Moorhead Fire Department [MFD]) and a strategic growth plan completed in 2007 (MFD) which called for further increases in staff and number of company officers within the department.

Booming economic conditions in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area resulted in a sharp increase in residential development in the City of Moorhead beginning in 2003. Population growth averaged 0.37% annually from 2000 to 2003, compared a 1.85% annual growth rate from 2003 to 2007 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).

A result of this growth was the decision to begin adding staff and planning for the opening of a third fire station. In 2008, six firefighters were hired, increasing the total sworn staff to 36. Plans were also put in place to reclassify the existing lieutenants as captains and promote three new captains in 2009. The long term goal was to place one captain at each of the three stations. The captains would be supervised by the assistant chief.

Another goal of this plan was to restructure the work flow and decentralize the administrative and supervisory functions of the department. Historically, the assistant chiefs served as on overall company officer for both stations. This position would



change to perform higher level managerial tasks, leaving daily administration and supervision to the company officers. At the time this project was conducted, the department was working through the challenge of this change in roles and responsibilities.

The greatest challenge had been migrating away from the informal nature of our business practices. Policies that were in place to outline expectations were often outdated, the practices having changed without changing the policies. Many job functions were performed without written policies in place to guide behavior. In this case, consistency had suffered, and different methods had been employed by different supervisors. Adding to this problem, the department also had four different policy books in addition to a City Employee Handbook and a union contract that outlined performance expectations. Often, several policies existed that addressed a particular subject, resulting in contradictory interpretations of acceptable behavior.

Regarding company officer expectations, the roles of the company officer had changed in the Moorhead Fire Department, and it was necessary to examine the body of policies in place and determine their adequacy, and any actions required to establish the desired set of expectations for existing and soon to be promoted company officers. These policies were necessary to guide the actions of company officers for years to come as the department continued to expand.

One of the most important functions of a company officer was to effectively develop and utilize a team structure to produce work during routine emergencies and emergency incidents. The Executive Development course at the National Fire Academy listed, "Clear roles and accountabilities," and "Methods for monitoring individual

performance and providing feedback” as two of the four components of an effective team structure (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA], 2006). Administrative and management policies outline the behaviors expected by members of the organization. If policies are absent, outdated, or conflicting, then no clear and comprehensive role could be defined for the individuals affected by the policy. In this case, the roles and accountabilities of the company officers of the Moorhead Fire Department were not fully defined. If their roles and accountabilities were not clearly defined, then their individual performance could not be effectively monitored by their supervisors, in this case, an assistant chief. The team supervised by the company officer could not therefore be effective in all their functions, and the assistant chief could not develop an efficient team of company officers. These problems had come to the attention of department personnel in the past, continued at the time this project was conducted, and would persist in the future, if corrective actions were not identified and taken.

It could also be generalized that firefighting teams that were not effective presented a greater risk of injury or death in the performance of their duties than those that were effective. If defining the roles and accountabilities of company officers and establishing a method of monitoring individual performance would lead to effective fire department teams being led by their company officers, then their risk of injury or death should be reduced. This would support the United States Fire Administration’s (USFA) operational objective to, “Reduce the loss of life from fire of firefighters” (National Fire Academy, 2008).

By increasing the team effectiveness of fire companies through the company officers of the Moorhead Fire Department, this project, through the Executive Fire

Officer Program, would also assist the United States Fire Administration in reaching Strategy B of Objective 4.1 of Goal 4 of its Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2009-2013, “Conduct studies and initiatives to develop and enhance the effectiveness of the fire service and fire safety” (FEMA, n.d.).

This research paper was intentionally limited in scope to address the administrative and supervisory functions of company officers. In this sense, most non-emergency functions performed by company officers would remain within the scope of this paper. Operational functions such as incident mitigation and fire command were not addressed in this paper.

### Literature Review

To determine the adequacy of existing policies, it was necessary to define the expected administrative and supervisory behaviors of company officers. The Moorhead Fire Department was in a unique position as they were transitioning from a centralized authority model to a distributed authority model that empowered company officers. The authority and expectations of company officers had not been specifically identified, however. A first logical step was to determine what laws, regulations, standards and policies outline the terms of company officer behaviors.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) had developed a host of regulations designed to reduce hazards to employees, many of which apply to fire department employees who are being managed by company officers. Similarly, the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry had adopted state regulations regarding the safety of workers in Minnesota and is known as Minnesota OSHA (MN-OSHA). While those safety related laws must be enforced by company officers, the related research,

details and scope of such an undertaking would be a more fitting subject for an independent research paper. The City of Moorhead was found to maintain a Safety Handbook that encompassed all of the State and Federal regulations applicable to employees of the city. J. Thompson, the Human Resources Director for the City of Moorhead had the responsibility to keep this manual current and worked with the City Safety Committee to make sure this occurred (personal communication, August 13, 2009).

Similarly, another broad topic for research resided within the regulations of the Environmental Protection Agency. These regulations primarily pertained to operational issues and were not addressed in this paper.

Federal legislation also existed covering data privacy, equal opportunity, and Americans with disabilities. Again, City policy language was found to exist and was reported to be current by J. Thompson, Human Resources Director, City of Moorhead (personal communication, August 13, 2009).

The Fair Labor Standards Act outlined how employees must be paid at a minimum for certain work performed by company officers and their subordinates. While a policy was not found to exist for the City in guiding payroll activities under that standard, company officers had no role in the administration of payroll, therefore the issue was dismissed (A. Villanueva, Payroll Technician, City of Moorhead, personal communication, August 14, 2009).

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) produced consensus standards as a means to fulfill their mission to, “reduce the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life” (NFPA, 2009). One such standard was the 2009 edition of

the NFPA 1021 fire officer standard. This standard outlined the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to function successfully as a company officer. Being a national *consensus* standard, there was no mandate to meet the standard, nor was it tailored to meet the specific needs of the Moorhead Fire Department. It did, however, provide a good base to build from regarding company officer behavior.

The standard classified four levels of company officer, levels I through IV, progressing from supervisory to administrative in scope (NFPA, 2008). It was clear from studying the standard that Fire Officer I is targeted at the company officer, and Fire Officer IV is targeted at the chief of the department. The intermediate officer levels are more difficult to universally classify. There were some elements of Fire Officer II that applied to the behaviors that were occurring by company officers in Moorhead at the time of this report. While reviewing the standard and other literature discussed further in this paper, matters dealing with emergency operations have been intentionally omitted.

Chapter four of the standard addressed Fire Officer I performance behaviors. The chapter was further subdivided into several types of behavior. Section 4.2 listed *human resource management* behaviors. Section 4.2.2 listed assigning tasks or responsibilities to his or her company members as a core function of company officer behavior (NFPA, 2008). This section also listed the knowledge and skills required to perform the outlined task, but the focus of this report is on the tasks themselves. Section 4.2.6 listed the coordination of these assigned tasks as an additional behavior (NFPA, 2008).

Section 4.2.4 stated that company officers should be able to identify and recommend actions for member-related problems such as substance abuse, stress,

financial, family and personal problems, or other problems that are adversely affecting their job performance (NFPA, 2008).

Section 4.2.5 listed the behavior of applying human resource policies and procedures in administrative situations as a key behavior (NFPA, 2008). It then continued on further detailing some of the possible administrative situations in section A.4.2.5, including transfers, sick leave, vacation, duty exchanges, commendation, disciplinary actions and grievances (NFPA, 2008). Other situations were also listed that are not addressed by company officers in Moorhead.

Chapter five of the standard outlined behaviors expected at the Officer II level. The chapter was divided into the same behavior types as chapter four. Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 outlined maximizing or correcting job performance or referring the employee and evaluating an employee's job performance as core behavior respectively (NFPA, 2008).

Section 4.3 listed behaviors related to *Community and Government Relations*. Two relevant behaviors found were initiating action to a citizen's concern that results in an answer or referral and responding to a public inquiry in sections 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 (NFPA, 2008).

*Administration* was the subject of section 4.4. Company officers were expected to recommend changes to or implement a new policy in section 4.4.1 and execute routine unit-level administrative functions such as entering and maintaining forms and records in section 4.4.2 (NFPA, 2008). They should have also been able to complete budget requests as outlined in 4.4.3 and been able to explain why collecting incident response data is necessary and beneficial as outlined in 4.4.5 (NFPA, 2008).

Section 4.5 focused on *Fire Prevention and Life Safety* issues. Here it was expected that company officers would complete fire inspections and pre-plan surveys as listed in sections 4.5.1 and 4.5.2 (NFPA, 2008).

Employee *Health and Safety* was the focus of section 4.7. Sections 4.7.1 and 4.7.2 stated that company officers should have been able to apply safety regulations within their company and conduct initial accident investigations (NFPA, 2008). Section 4.7.3 required that company officers explained the need and benefits of participating in wellness and fitness programs (NFPA, 2008).

*Figure 1* presents a summary of the recommendations of NFPA 1021 and will serve as the basis for comparing the recommendation of other texts that follow.

NFPA 1021 COMPANY OFFICER BEHAVIOR	SECTION
<b>HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Assign tasks or responsibilities to company members	4.2.2
Identify and recommend actions for member-related problems	4.2.4
Apply human resource policies and procedures in administrative situations	4.2.5
Transfers	A.4.2.5
Sick Leave	A.4.2.5
Vacation	A.4.2.5
Duty Exchange	
Commendation	A.4.2.5
Disciplinary actions	A.4.2.5
Grievances	A.4.2.5
Coordinate the completion of assigned tasks and projects	4.2.6
Maximize or correct performance or refer employee	5.2.1
Evaluate employee job performance	5.2.2
<b>COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS</b>	
Initiate action to a citizen's concern resulting in an answer or referral	4.3.2
Respond to a public inquiry	4.3.3
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>	
Recommend changes to or implement a new policy at the company level	4.4.1
Execute routine unit-level administrative functions	4.4.2
Complete a budget request	4.4.3
Explain the needs and benefits of collecting incident response data	4.4.5
<b>FIRE PREVENTION &amp; LIFE SAFETY</b>	
Complete fire inspections	4.5.1
Complete a pre-plan inspection	4.5.2
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>	
Apply safety regulations at unit level	4.7.1
Conduct initial accident investigation	4.7.2
Explain the need and benefits of participating in wellness and fitness programs	4.7.3

*Figure 1.* Summarized administrative and supervisory company officer behaviors found in NFPA 1021, 2009 edition.

When viewed as a whole, the recommendations of NFPA 1021 appeared to be a good starting point to define the expected administrative and supervisory behaviors for company officers. The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) would also agree.



One of the missions of the IAFC was to provide leadership, vision, and education to fire service officers internationally (International Association of Fire Chiefs [IAFC], 2009). In November of 2003, the IAFC published a handbook that provided a planned pathway of education, experience and training to become a competent company officer. One of the first things the manual recommended was the inclusion of the performance behaviors identified in NFPA 1021 (IAFC, 2003). These were the same behaviors already identified in Figure 1, with the simultaneous inclusion of the operational behaviors at incidents. The Handbook stressed that the NFPA 1021 standard only served as a base, and that other factors must also be considered in the successful performance of a company officer. That being said, other sources of information should also be consulted.

In addition to the NFPA Standard, several textbooks had been published to provide education for company officers. In the past several years, most of the American textbooks had centered on NFPA 1021 as a guide. It is not surprising that most of the manuals covered a majority of the behaviors listed in the standard. In fact, most of the manuals progressed far beyond these basic competencies and proved a good source for additional information about the expected administrative and management behaviors of company officers.

It should be noted that none of the textbooks reviewed for this report adequately covered each of the NFPA 1021 recommendations. This should underscore the need to consult multiple sources of information when addressing a problem. One glaring example was the failure of any of the major texts to cover section 4.4.5 requiring a company officer to be able to explain why collecting incident response data is necessary and beneficial (NFPA, 2008). Fortunately, a free publication was available from the

United States Fire Administration discussing the many research, public safety, and legal benefits derived from fire data (TriData Corporation, 1997).

Jones and Bartlett published their company officer book in 2006. This textbook was part of an educational package designed to provide initial training for new company officers. This book was written to address the 2003 edition of the NFPA 1021 standard, and was deficient in some of the newly revised areas of the standard. This book tended to be weak on applying human resource policies, coordinating the completion of assigned tasks, and recommending changes to or implementing new policies. It did not cover budget requests or collecting incident response data (Ward, 2006). The book agreed, however, with all of the remaining sections of NFPA 1021 previously discussed. A new edition of the textbook was under development, but was not available at the time this project was completed.

The Jones and Bartlett book did excel in other areas that appeared to define core company officer behaviors, including a two page section on purchasing, six pages on problem solving, and nine on conflict resolution. Nine pages were also devoted to delivering training sessions as a function of being a company officer (Ward, 2006). While the NFPA 1021 standard does not specifically outline this behavior for company officers, it did require that an individual meet the requirements for Instructor I as found in NFPA 1041. The Instructor I delivered training to department members from already prepared lesson plans, adjusted the content as necessary for the audience, administered tests, provided feedback, maintained records, and was able to manage the physical resources of the classroom (NFPA, 2007). These behaviors were obviously intended to

be utilized by the company officer and should have been addressed in the body of existing policy language.

Another textbook designed to train company officers to the 2003 edition of NFPA 1021 was Thompson Delmar Learning's company officer book, published in 2005. Like the Jones and Bartlett book, it was also weak on applying human resource policies, and did not address the importance of collecting incident response data (Smoke, 2005). Additionally, the book was short in the area of executing routine administrative functions and did not address member-related problems, concerns from citizens, or public inquiries (Smoke, 2005). The book did agree with all of the remaining sections of NFPA 1021 previously discussed. A new edition of the textbook was under development, but also was not available at the time this project was completed.

Delmar did agree with Jones and Bartlett by adding material on conflict resolution, problem solving, training, and education (Smoke, 2005). Additional information was also provided on time management and completing budget requests; both areas that company officers should have been proficient in, and was, therefore, added to the behaviors being considered for company officers in Moorhead.

The International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) had one of the longest histories of publishing fire training manuals. Seventy three years after publishing its first manual, IFSTA introduced their latest company officer book in 2007 (International Fire Service Training Association, n.d.). Although it was designed around the 2009 edition of NFPA 1021, it suffered from the same failure to address the benefits of collecting incident data. While it was very thorough overall in areas of human resource policy, it did fail to address transfers and commendations (Stowell, 2007). In

spite of this, the IFSTA book was found to be the most thorough and agreed with all of the remaining sections of NFPA 1021 previously discussed.

As with the other books, IFSTA addressed additional administrative and supervisory behaviors for company officers. It also contained information on conflict resolution, time management, problem solving, and training and education, agreeing with previous books (Stowell, 2007). In addition, IFSTA addressed managing the physical resources available to the company officer as well as devoting 22 pages to public fire education. These additional tasks were being performed by company officers in Moorhead and should, therefore, be further considered.

There are other fire service related books that provided insight into the expected behaviors of company officers. One such book on fire service management was written by Harry R. Carter, PhD and Erwin Rausch. While this book did not propose to follow NFPA 1021, or any other standard as its basis, it was found to address many portions of the standard. Like many of the textbooks, it lacked information on applying human resource policies, and failed to address the benefits of collecting incident data. It also did not fully address coordinating the completion of assigned tasks, and did not cover recommending changes to or implementing a new policy. In addition, it did not focus on budget requests, applying safety regulations, conducting accident investigations, or the benefits of a wellness program (Carter & Rausch, 2008).

In spite of these limitations, the book did a surprisingly thorough job of addressing the NFPA 1021 behaviors being addressed in this project, agreeing with all of the remaining sections previously discussed. Carter & Rausch also agreed with many of the additions proposed by the previous authors by adding sections on conflict resolution,

time management, managing physical resources, conducting public education, and delivering training and education (2008). They proceeded even further, however, and added information on conducting effective meetings and establishing goals and objectives. These performances were also being conducted by company officers in Moorhead, and should also be further studied.

There were also a number of books targeted toward Chief level officers. Richard A. Marinucci, Chief of the Farmington Hills Fire Department in Michigan wrote a book focusing on fire service administration in 2009. Like most books written for higher level officers, it did not attempt to follow the NFPA 1021 Standard. It did agree with other sources previously presented that time management, conducting successful meetings, revising policies and the delegation and management of tasks were essential responsibilities for management staff (Marinucci, 2009). Mariucci's book was like many other chief officer books in that only small portions of the overall text were applicable to company officer. For that reason, other similar books were not included in this project.

*Figure 2* shows a summary of all of the company officer performance behaviors found in each of the sources reviewed thus far. The number in the NFPA 1021 column refers to the section number within the standard. The numbers in the remaining columns refer to the page number or numbers devoted to information on the behavior for that row. Blank entries mean that the subject was not addresses by that source.

COMPANY OFFICER BEHAVIOR	NFPA 1021	J & B Fire Officer (Ward)	Delmar Company Officer (Smoke)	IFSTA Company Officer (Stowell)	Management in the Fire Service (Carter & Rausch)
<b>HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>					
Assign tasks or responsibilities to company members	4.2.2	160-168	99, 105	285-295	291-295
Identify and recommend actions for member-related problems	4.2.4*	153-154		298-299	290-291
Apply human resource policies and procedures in administrative situations	4.2.5*			285-308	
Transfers	A.4.2.5				
Sick Leave	A.4.2.5			296-297	
Vacation	A.4.2.5			295-296	
Duty Exchange				295	
Commendation	A.4.2.5		157-160		276-280
Disciplinary actions	A.4.2.5	149-153	160-162	304-307, 619-621	184-185, 287-290
Grievances	A.4.2.5	90-91	163-164	324-326	207-209
Coordinate the completion of assigned tasks and projects	4.2.6		99, 105	58-63	
Maximize or correct performance or refer employee	5.2.1	160-168	146-150	60-66, 609-617	272-275
Evaluate employee job performance	5.2.2	140-146	151-157	295, 585-587	190-191, 281-283
Conflict Resolution		194-205	163	297-298, 300-304	284-286
<b>COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS</b>					
Initiate action to a citizen's concern resulting in an answer or referral	4.3.2	205-209		347-349	
Respond to a public inquiry	4.3.3	178		349	
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>					
Recommend changes to or implement a new policy at the company level	4.4.1		164-167	523-532	
Execute routine unit-level administrative functions	4.4.2	272-282		363-374	191-192
Complete a budget request	4.4.3		104	636-642	
Explain the needs and benefits of collecting incident response data	4.4.5				
Time Management			105	533	295
Problem Solving		194-200	108	73-92	
Managing the physical resources				521	157-160
Conduct Effective Meetings					268
Establish goals and objectives					302-303
Purchasing		255-256		642-650	
<b>FIRE PREVENTION &amp; LIFE SAFETY</b>					
Complete fire inspections	4.5.1	227-228	233-240	664-699	80-81
Complete a pre-plan inspection	4.5.2	214-220	292-304	393-409	116-129
Conduct Public Education				324-346	96-106
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>					
Apply safety regulations at unit level	4.7.1	112-115	176-202	219-226	
Conduct initial accident investigation	4.7.2	115	185-168	227-230, 771-779	
Explain the need/benefits of participating in wellness and fitness programs	4.7.3	101-112	202-207	219-226	
<b>TRAINING &amp; EDUCATION</b>					
Deliver prepared drills to ensure readiness		125-134	168-190, 305-311	263-281	219-239

Figure 2. Summarized administrative and supervisory company officer behaviors found in sources reviewed thus far.

Having established a list of administrative supervisory behaviors, the question remained; how did Moorhead's policies stack up? In the area of human resource management, seven behaviors were identified, with one of these being broken down into seven sub performances. In half of the cases, the policies were found to be adequate. For the remaining half, no policies existed that addressed the identified behavior. Those behaviors tied to more traditional human resource roles like sick leave and member assistance programs tended to have policies in place. Behaviors that dealt with managing the performance of tasks and general performance tended to not have existing policies. The same 50/50 split was found in the community and government relations area (MFD, n.d.).

When it came to administration, eight of the ten areas had no policy, and the remaining two were outdated. Of the three fire prevention and life safety behaviors, two were outdated and one had no policy. All three health and safety performance areas had adequate policies, but the training and education policy was outdated as well (MFD, n.d.). The results are summarized in *Figure 3*. "Old" policies are outdated. Policies listed as "OK" are adequate. Where "None" is listed, no policy currently exists. "City" refers to City of Moorhead policies, not Moorhead Fire Department policies.

COMPANY OFFICER POLICY	NFPA 1021	Moorhead Fire Department Policies
<b>HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>		
Assign tasks or responsibilities to company members	4.2.2	None
Identify and recommend actions for member-related problems	4.2.4*	(City) OK
Apply human resource policies and procedures in administrative situations	4.2.5*	OK/None
Transfers	A.4.2.5	OK
Sick Leave	A.4.2.5	OK
Vacation	A.4.2.5	OK
Duty Exchange		OK
Commendation	A.4.2.5	None
Disciplinary actions	A.4.2.5	None
Grievances	A.4.2.5	OK
Coordinate the completion of assigned tasks and projects	4.2.6	None
Maximize or correct performance or refer employee	5.2.1	None
Evaluate employee job performance	5.2.2	None
Conflict Resolution		None
<b>COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS</b>		
Initiate action to a citizen's concern resulting in an answer or referral	4.3.2	OK
Respond to a public inquiry	4.3.3	None
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
Recommend changes to or implement a new policy at the company level	4.4.1	None
Execute routine unit-level administrative functions	4.4.2	Old
Complete a budget request	4.4.3	None
Explain the needs and benefits of collecting incident response data	4.4.5	None
Time Management		None
Problem Solving		None
Managing the physical resources		Old
Conduct Effective Meetings		None
Establish goals and objectives		None
Purchasing		None
<b>FIRE PREVENTION &amp; LIFE SAFETY</b>		
Complete fire inspections	4.5.1	Old
Complete a pre-plan inspection	4.5.2	Old
Conduct Public Education		None
<b>HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>		
Apply safety regulations at unit level	4.7.1	(City) OK
Conduct initial accident investigation	4.7.2	(City) OK
Explain the need/benefits of participating in wellness and fitness programs	4.7.3	(City) OK
<b>TRAINING &amp; EDUCATION</b>		
Deliver prepared drills to ensure readiness		Old

Figure 3. A Summary of how well Moorhead policies address the company officer behaviors identified thus far in the literature review.



How did Moorhead's situation compare to other departments? Policies were obtained on-line from 28 other fire service agencies using keyword searches on the internet. The policies from many other departments were rejected at the time of the search due to an obvious lack of administrative and supervisory policies. Of these 28, 18 were rejected after further review due to a lack of focus in administrative and supervisory areas. The remaining 10 policies were generally qualified as "Marginal" or "Well Developed", in terms of the number of actual administrative areas addressed and/or quality or thoroughness of the policies.

The Jonesboro (AK) Fire Department had the most complete administrative section (Jonesboro Fire Department, 2009), followed closely by the Toppenish (WA) Fire Department. Both departments fell short in several of the remaining areas, however (Jonesboro Fire Department, 2009; Toppenish Fire Department, n.d.).

The Boulder (CO) Rural Fire Protection District had the most well organized policies, and were well written. There were many areas that were not addressed, but those areas that had policies, were well developed (Boulder Rural Fire Protection District, 2008).

Prince George's County, Maryland had a very well developed set of policies. While they were not as extensive as some of the other department's policies, those they did have covered performance areas often ignored by others. The "gaps" that were addressed by Prince George's County made their policies worthy of consideration when developing a comprehensive set of policies (Prince George's County Fire Commission, 2003).

The most comprehensive policies found were issued from the Los Angeles (City) Fire Department. The policies were contained in a number of volumes within the department library and involved extensive searching to research and catalog. Their sheer volumes made it difficult to easily navigate and would be difficult to become familiar with, but were the most complete. In spite of this, gaps still remained, with health and safety issues not being addressed at all (Los Angeles Fire Department, n.d.).

It appeared that every department had room for improvement in their policies. It is this purpose that John Lee Cook, Jr. addressed in his book on standard operating procedures. He proposed 150 unique policies to address a comprehensive series of issues common to American fire departments. These policies were compared with the previously identified company officer behaviors. While Cook did address a majority of the behaviors, he did not surpass Los Angeles's comprehensiveness, leaving areas yet to be addressed (1998). A comparison of these existing policies is presented in *Figure 4*. Five additional policies are presented in the comparison listed as being "Marginal" (Albuquerque, n.d.; Anderson, n.d.; Dandridge Volunteer Fire Department, 2008; Phoenix Fire Department, n.d.; Winter Park Fire Rescue Department, n.d.). They further illustrate the problem of incomplete policies, but did not warrant further discussion. An "X" in a cell indicated that the agency listed in that column addressed the skill listed in that row.

COMPANY OFFICER POLICY			NFPA 1021	Moorhead Fire Department Policies	Well Developed					Marginal				
					Standard Operating Guidelines (Cook)	Boulder Rural	Jonesboro	Los Angeles	Prince George's Co.	Toppenish	Anderson	Albuquerque	Dandridge	Phoenix
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT														
Assign tasks or responsibilities to company members	4.2.2	None	102.07		X	X		X						
Identify and recommend actions for member-related problems	4.2.4*	(City) OK	406.01				X				X		X	
Apply human resource policies and procedures in administrative situations	4.2.5*	OK/None	Sections 100 & 400			X		X						
Transfers	A.4.2.5	OK	100.14	X	X						X			X
Sick Leave	A.4.2.5	OK			X	X		X			X		X	
Vacation	A.4.2.5	OK	100.07		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Duty Exchange		OK	100.12	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	
Commendation	A.4.2.5	None		X			X							
Disciplinary actions	A.4.2.5	None	100.05		X			X			X	X	X	
Grievances	A.4.2.5	OK	100.06		X							X		
Coordinate the completion of assigned tasks and projects	4.2.6	None	102.07			X		X						
Maximize or correct performance or refer employee	5.2.1	None											X	
Evaluate employee job performance	5.2.2	None	201.04	X	X	X								
Conflict Resolution		None						X						
COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS														
Initiate action to a citizen's concern resulting in an answer or referral	4.3.2	OK			X	X							X	
Respond to a public inquiry	4.3.3	None	201.03			X								X
ADMINISTRATION														
Recommend changes to or implement a new policy at the company level	4.4.1	None		X		X								
Execute routine unit-level administrative functions	4.4.2	Old	Section 200			X		X			X	X		
Complete a budget request	4.4.3	None												
Explain the needs and benefits of collecting incident response data	4.4.5	None	203.04	X	X	X						X		
Time Management		None				X								
Problem Solving		None												
Managing the physical resources		Old	102.09	X		X		X	X	X				
Conduct Effective Meetings		None												
Establish goals and objectives		None			X									
Purchasing		None				X	X							
FIRE PREVENTION & LIFE SAFETY														
Complete fire inspections	4.5.1	Old	901.01			X								X
Complete a pre-plan inspection	4.5.2	Old				X			X					X
Conduct Public Education		None				X		X					X	X
HEALTH AND SAFETY														
Apply safety regulations at unit level	4.7.1	(City) OK	Section 400	X				X	X	X			X	
Conduct initial accident investigation	4.7.2	(City) OK						X	X				X	
Explain the need/benefits of participating in wellness and fitness programs	4.7.3	(City) OK						X	X				X	
TRAINING & EDUCATION														
Deliver prepared drills to ensure readiness		Old	202.01			X		X	X			X		X

Figure 4. A Summary of the findings of existing policies regarding whether they addressed the company officer behaviors identified thus far in the literature review.

It was clear that no single source had been able to define what administrative and managerial behaviors are recommended for company officers. Examining a variety of sources however revealed that a series of behaviors could be assembled. In reviewing the policies of the Moorhead Fire Department, it was found that the policies did not comprehensively address these behaviors. This was a common problem found in every other department that policies were collected from, as well as Cook's reference book of model polices to be used as a guide (1998).

### Procedures

The research began with a review of literature on administrative policies, management policies, and policy development at the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, MD in March of 2009. The literature review returned very little in terms of printed work that made recommendations for administrative and supervisory policies. The research was then expanded to define expected administrative and supervisory performance behaviors for company officers through training recommendations, manuals, articles and Applied Research Projects. While a base of useful information was located, it should be noted that the bulk of materials found during research efforts focused on operational skills and abilities.

Research continued in June by conducting on-line research for applicable books, journal articles, and electronic information. Written materials were purchased and reviewed. Additional literature review continued at local libraries and bookstores from June through August, 2009. During that same time period, several on-line searches were conducted using Google and MSN Search (now Bing) and multiple combinations of the following search terms: fire, department, service, policy, policies, rules, regulations,

SOG, SOGs, SOP, SOPs, suggested, operating, guideline, guidelines, procedure, procedures and manual. A large number of department policies were found from a wide cross-sampling of fire departments.

After the literature review was complete, the author focused on the research questions. The first research question was, “What company officer administrative and supervisory behaviors are outlined by existing laws, regulations, standards and policies?” The literature review revealed a large body of information on existing laws for company officers. All of the body of law information centered on OSHA and MN-OSHA rules and issues of data privacy. A review of City of Moorhead policies and personal communications conducted with the City of Moorhead Human Resources Director, Jean Thompson, confirmed that these policies were both thorough and intended to be administered at the City and not the Department level. Literature review revealed the existence of an NFPA standard covering company officer behavior as well as policies from a number of other fire departments and one book of suggested policies that were used to justify the need for and evaluate the adequacy of existing Moorhead Fire Department policies.

Literature review was also used to answer the research question, “What company officer administrative and supervisory behaviors are addressed by industry experts?” A number of books developed by panels of industry experts, as well as the NFPA 1021, also developed by industry experts answered this question. At the end of the literature review a set of company officer behaviors was developed following the NFPA groupings and recommendations coupled with the other recommendations found by other authors, *see Figure 2*.

Next, a series of interviews were conducted to research answers for the next question; “What administrative and supervisory behaviors are expected of company officers by the Moorhead Fire Department?” The Moorhead Fire Department had a fairly small population of 37 members. The Department was also undergoing change and was expanding the role and number of company officers. It was decided to limit the scope of the interviews to those people who have had at least a minimum amount of experience as a company officer, so they may knowledgably answer the questions posed. In this case, the chief of the department, four assistant chiefs, three lieutenants and three acting lieutenants were selected as the sample group. This represented all active staff members who were company officers at the time, who had been company officer before being promoted, or who had been given the expectation that they would be company officers after the department budget was set for 2010. These personnel represented a well rounded approach in terms of knowledge of the job and years of experience within the department. The researcher was excluded from this group.

These interviews were conducted in August and September of 2009. While the interviews provided valuable information, it was not sufficient to fully answer the research questions or build statistically reliable answers, see *Appendix A*.

A questionnaire was then developed listing 24 potential performance behaviors based upon the literature review and the surveys conducted. The same sample group selected for the interviews was used for the questionnaire. Four questions were asked for each of these behaviors. The first question was designed to determine whether or not company officers were expected to perform this behavior. A) Should company officers perform this behavior? The questionnaire design can be found in *Appendix C*.

The last research question, “what perceived deficiencies exist in company officer administrative and supervisory behavior and/or policies within the Moorhead Fire Department?” was also addressed by the questionnaire. Three additional dimensions were measured for the 24 behavioral elements. b) How well is this function being performed now? c) Are the policies adequate? d) If you answered no, what is the biggest problem?

The questionnaire was prepared and delivered electronically using SurveyMonkey® ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)). A matrix of drop-down menus was selected for the format which allowed the behavior to be listed in a columnar format with four questions posed for each behavior in a row to the left of each behavior. A sample of the layout may be found in *Appendix C*.

An analysis of the findings was then conducted, findings prepared and recommendations made for further actions based upon the findings.

### *Limitations*

This research paper was limited to the study of administrative and supervisory company officer behaviors. Company officer behaviors associated with emergency incidents, non-emergency incidents, and related assignments were not studied.

The City of Moorhead Human Resources Department (H.R.) held the primary role in establishing and maintaining safety and data related policies for all City employees. These policies were assured to be accurate, current and complete by H.R. For these reasons, company officer policies related to safety and data privacy were also removed from the study.

Firefighters were not included in interviews and questionnaires due to their potential lack of experiential understanding about company officer roles and functions.

### Results

OSHA and MN-OSHA were found to have many regulations related to worker safety that company officers of the Moorhead Fire Department would be responsible for enforcing. The City of Moorhead maintained an Exposure Control Plan, A Workplace Accident and Injury Reduction Program, a Data Use and Privacy Policy and an inclusive Safety Manual that covered all employees of the City of Moorhead. These documents were maintained by the Human Resources Department for the City of Moorhead, and it became apparent during the literature review and during communications with the Director of the department that they wished to maintain control of these policies and avoid duplication. These areas were then removed from study.

NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications (2009 ed.), outlined a broad range of officer performance behaviors and related knowledge skills and abilities to perform them. Seventeen unique performance behaviors were identified, and one behavior was broken down into seven sub-behaviors.

Reviewing the performance behaviors suggested by several training textbooks revealed 26 unique administrative and supervisory company officer performance behaviors, again with one of them being broken down into seven sub-behaviors. These were then grouped into six categories. These were the administrative and supervisory company officer behaviors identified by existing laws, regulations, standards and policies and recommended by industry experts. Those noted with an asterisk were judged by the



author to have non-existent or outdated policies associated with them for the Moorhead Fire Department as previously identified in *Figures 3 and 4*.

*Human Resource Management*

Assign tasks or responsibilities to company members\*

Identify and recommend actions for member-related problems

Apply human resource policies and procedures in administrative situations

Transfers

Sick Leave

Vacation

Duty Exchange

Commendation\*

Disciplinary actions\*

Grievances

Coordinate the completion of assigned tasks and projects\*

Maximize or correct performance or refer employee\*

Evaluate employee job performance\*

Conflict Resolution\*

*Community and Government Relations*

Initiate action to a citizen's concern resulting in an answer or referral

Respond to a public inquiry\*

*Administration*

Recommend changes to or implement a new policy at the company level\*

Execute routine unit-level administrative functions\*

Complete a budget request\*

Explain the needs and benefits of collecting incident response data\*

Time management\*

Problem solving\*

Managing the physical resources\*

Conduct effective meetings\*

Establish goals and objectives\*

Purchasing\*

#### *Fire Prevention and Life Safety*

Complete fire inspections\*

Complete a pre-plan inspection\*

Conduct Public Education\*

#### *Health and Safety*

Apply safety regulations at unit level

Conduct initial accident investigation

Explain the need/benefits of participating in wellness and fitness programs

#### *Training and Education*

Deliver prepared drills to ensure readiness\*

Interviews were then conducted with 11 fire department personnel. When asked what administrative company officer functions were vital, 91% responded with answers indicating the entering of incident reports. Over half of the interviewees also indicated entering daily journals, documenting daily truck and equipment checks and documenting training activities as being vital. Other answers were provided in lesser numbers.

When asked about what supervisory company officer functions were vital, over half of the respondents listed verifying successful completion of tasks and activities and supervising the crew during station duties. Other answers were provided in lesser numbers.

When asked about other administrative and/or supervisory functions that were performed by company officers, there were no answers that a majority of interviewees answered in common.

When asked if there were any administrative and/or supervisory functions that should currently be performed but were not, 64% of interviewees said yes. When asked to elaborate, there were no answers that a majority of interviewees answered in common.

When asked if there were any administrative and/or supervisory functions that were currently being performed but should not be, 91% of interviewees said no.

When asked in what administrative and/or supervisory areas, if any, that company officers needed improvement in, there were no answers that a majority of interviewees answered in common.

Eighty-two percent (82%) of interviewees said that our current policies were not adequate, but when asked for suggestions for policy revision no two people gave the same answer.

The last question gave an opportunity to add final comments. There were no additional comments that people had in common.

The interviews did identify a few vital functions and established that Moorhead Fire Department officers and prospective officers felt that company officers should have

been performing functions that they were not currently doing. They also identified current policies as being inadequate. Full interview results are contained in *Appendix B*.

It was found that not enough data was provided to narrow the scope of the problem, so a questionnaire was developed and administered utilizing company officer behavior elements that were similar to those identified in the literature review. The same 11 officers and prospective officers that were interviewed were invited to take the questionnaire, 100% participated.

#### *Human Resource Management*

With the exception of handling grievances, questionnaire participants strongly agreed that all other functions should be performed by company officers. Of these, it was indicated that daily tasks were performed well by 64% of respondents. Job performance needed improvement for evaluating job performance (64%), conducts disciplinary action (73%) and establishing goals and objectives (73%). All other results were inconclusive. The only policy thought strongly to be inadequate was establishing goals and objectives (73%). There was no conclusive reason identified for this.

#### *Community and Government Relations*

All the tasks were strongly identified as needing to be performed, and no problems were indicated.

#### *Administration*

Questionnaire respondents indicated strongly (73%) that managing the station budget should not be performed by the company officer. All other tasks were strongly identified as needing to be performed. No other problems were conclusively identified.

*Fire Prevention and Life Safety*

There was no conclusion about whether commercial fire inspections should be performed, but all other tasks were strongly identified as needing to be performed. Respondents felt that rental housing inspections (91%) and public education (73%) were performed well. There were no clear indicators of performance on the remaining tasks. There was strong agreement that the policies concerning managing commercial fire inspections (90%) and performing initial fire investigations (73%) were inadequate. In both cases, the root cause was identified as being due to no policy existing.

*Health and Safety*

All tasks were identified as needing to be performed. There was no consensus about adequacy of performance. It was strongly felt that the accident investigation policy was inadequate (73%) due to no policy existing (88%). The other policies were either adequate, or an answer was inconclusive.

*Training*

All tasks were strongly indicated as being necessary. It was felt that improvement was needed in all areas, with determining training needs (82%) and delivering training (64%) receiving the strongest responses. All of the training policies were judged to be inadequate due to a lack of existing policies.

A more general question was also asked about the status of the body of policies as a whole. No conclusions could be drawn from the responses.

The full results of the questionnaire are located in Appendix D. It should be noted that a simple majority of answers was not always considered statistically significant. For

example, on a yes or no question, if 54.5% or six (6) respondents answered yes, and 45.5% or five (5) respondents answered no, no definite conclusion could be reached.

Using the administrative and supervisory company officer behaviors identified in the literature review, and taking into account the results of the of the questionnaire, a new list of 20 administrative and supervisory behaviors that were expected of Moorhead Fire Department company officers was developed.

#### *Human Resource Management*

Apply human resource policies and procedures in administrative situations

Assigns tasks or responsibilities to company members and coordinates their completion

Maximizes employee performance

Corrects employee performance (discipline) or refers employee including member related problems

Evaluates employee job performance

Resolves conflict

Establishes goals and objectives for the company

#### *Community and Government Relations*

Initiates actions in response to citizens' concerns resulting in answers or referrals

Responds to public inquiries

*Administration*

Executes routine unit-level administrative functions

Explains the needs and benefits of collecting incident response data

*Fire Prevention and Life Safety*

Completes initial fire inspections

Completes pre-plan inspections

Conducts public education sessions

*Health and Safety*

Applies safety regulations at unit level

Conducts initial accident investigations

Promotes the need and benefits of participating in wellness and fitness  
programs

*Training and Education*

Determines the training needs for the company

Delivers prepared drills to ensure readiness

Documents training activities

The questionnaire revealed that five (5) deficiencies existed in company officer administrative and supervisory behavior within the Moorhead Fire Department.

Improvement was needed in the conducts disciplinary actions, establishing goals and objectives, determines training needs, delivers training programs, and documents training activities areas. Of these, only the conducting disciplinary actions behavior was accompanied by a policy that was considered adequate. It was assumed that the problems

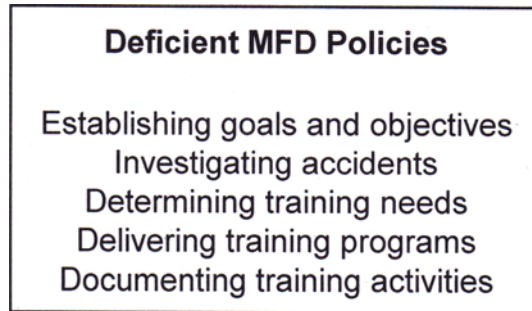
with this behavior were associated with other factors. The remaining performance deficiencies were also associated with policy deficiencies.

The questionnaire also revealed that eight (8) deficiencies existed in company officer administrative and supervisory policies within the Moorhead Fire Department. These policies were: establishing goals and objectives, manages the station budget, manages commercial fire inspections, performs initial fire investigations, investigates accidents, determines training needs, delivers training programs, and documents training activities areas.

Of these, a majority of respondents felt that managing the station budget was not a desired behavior of company officers in Moorhead, and there was no conclusive evidence that managing commercial fire inspections was a desired behavior either. Neither of these functions were being performed by company officers in Moorhead at the time of this project. These two policies were then removed from consideration due to a lack of impact. A performance behavior that was measured in error was, performs initial fire investigations. While this function did have value, it was operational in nature and not a purely administrative or supervisory skill within the scope of this project. It was also removed from further consideration.

The remaining five (5) deficient policies: establishing goals and objectives, investigates accidents, determines training needs, delivers training programs, and documents training activities areas were the final identified deficiencies that existed in company officer administrative and supervisory policies within the Moorhead Fire Department. These policies are also listed in Figure 5.





*FIGURE 5* – Moorhead Fire Department company officer administrative and supervisory policies found to be deficient.

It was unexpected to discover that the number of policy deficiencies identified by members of the Moorhead Fire Department was significantly lower than the number of policy deficiencies interpreted by the author. What can be concluded is that those personnel that are in positions to work as company officers or oversee the work of company officers may have very different impressions of the current policy situation and the impacts thereof from those of the author who works in an administrative capacity.

There was, however, a strong correlation between those areas identified by MFD personnel as being deficient in both performance as well as policy, indicating the results are based upon actual impressions of the conditions that exist for company officers.

### Discussion

This project set out to define two basic conditions, what did outside sources recommend for administrative and supervisory policies for company officers, and what did employees internally perceive about their conditions.

When discussing what administrative and supervisory behaviors were expected at a minimum, the NFPA 1021 Standard on Fire Officer Professional Qualifications was found to provide a good base of behaviors. As a whole, these 23 basic behaviors (NFPA, 2008) were found to be supported by the consistent references and discussion found in

the three company officer textbooks (Smoke, 2005; Stowell, 2007; Ward, 2006) and by Carter and Rausch (2008). The IAFC further strengthened the recommendation of these behaviors in their Officer Development Handbook (2003).

The questionnaire results also agreed with the literature review as a whole. In the two instances where it was felt that company officers should not perform the behavior, (handles grievances & manages the station budget), a more senior officer performed the task at the time. The value of the task, or its need to be performed was not diminished.

The questionnaire results did identify perceived deficiencies in company officer performance, and those results correlated with perceived inadequacies of department policy.

A surprising condition was found when comparing the body of Moorhead Fire Department policies with the questionnaire results. No correlation was found between the existence of a policy or the relevancy of information in a policy and the perceived adequacy of either the policy itself or the performance of a company officer that such a policy would regulate. While the author observed that 16 of the final company officer behaviors did not have adequate policies governing their behavior, the questionnaire revealed that only five (5) of these were perceived to be problematic. In all other cases, the respondents did not statistically identify policy problems.

This may have been due to a lack of actual problems in the field versus the potential for problems. It may have been due to a strong network of informal policies that were governing behavior. There may also have been a general consensus on these issues or a general state of apathy might have existed.

In any event, regardless of the somewhat unexpected results on the problem side, a small set of known problems was identified that do pertain to an agreed upon core of company officer behaviors, making the research effort worthwhile and beneficial.

What this meant for the Moorhead Fire Department is that five problem areas for the department could now be addressed. Specifically, improving accident investigations would likely directly increase firefighter safety by identifying the root cause of accidents and communicating that information to other staff members to reduce the number of repeat incidents, injuries and deaths.

Establishing goals and objectives are essential when attempting to increase team efficiency. Establishing policy guidelines in this regard would be likely to increase productivity in the department as a whole by focusing their efforts on the outcomes that would most effective or productive.

Establishing three policies on training would directly impact both firefighter safety and team effectiveness. Company officers would now have a process to measure individual and team performance, prescribe training activities to improve performance and add new capabilities and properly document the efforts. An increase in skill sets and proficiency should have also resulted in a direct increase in safety by utilizing best practices and conducting periodic performance review.

These potential outcomes would assist in increasing team effectiveness as outlined in the Executive development course (FEMA, 2006), would support the USFA's goal to, "Reduce the loss of life from fire of fire fighters" (National Fire Academy, 2008) and would aid the USFA in reaching its strategic plan goal to, "conduct studies and

initiatives to develop and enhance the effectiveness of the fire service and fire safety.”  
(FEMA, n.d.).

### Recommendations

Five new policies should be developed that outline the specific procedures to be used and factors to consider when performing the job tasks for each of the five administrative and supervisory policy areas identified to be deficient. It would be reasonable to assemble some of the same participants in the questionnaires to form a policy making committee to develop these new policies. This would allow those who have a stake in these areas to have input on the process, and increase the likelihood of developing effective policies.

The new policies put in place as a result should be evaluated one to three months after they have been put to effective use by the company officers. Adequacy, effectiveness, accuracy and appropriateness should be measured by the people affected by the policy, and their supervisors. Necessary revisions should be made, and the process repeated until a proven stable policy exists. The process should then be repeated annually thereafter.

Further study was warranted to examine the potential impact, if any, of the remaining outdated or missing policies. It was possible that the policies that were in place at the time of this project were adequate. It was also possible that as more policies were to be added or revised, issues that held little importance previously, may rise in significance in the wake. In any event, more research was warranted to define the scope of the problem and identify possible solutions.

This project would have benefitted from tighter control over the company officer behavior descriptions from the literature review to the questionnaire. The modification of some of the items to make them more clearly understood during the questionnaire resulted in a reduced ability to make one-to-one correlations between the two. The number of performance areas in the questionnaire was reduced with the intention of decreasing participant dissatisfaction with the intent of collecting more reliable data. This may or may not have occurred, but this again resulted in a reduced ability to make one-to-one correlations between the literature review and the questionnaire.

In spite of these two shortcomings, productive data was produced from the project that should result in a positive impact for company officer performance, consistency of operations, team effectiveness and firefighter safety.

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## Appendix A

## Fire Department Interview Questions

Moorhead Fire Department  
2009 Applied Research Interview Guide  
Jeff Wallin

Administrative functions refer to the office tasks required to support a business effort like documentation and reporting. Supervisory functions refer to those overseeing the work of others. This interview is designed to gather information about the administrative and supervisory functions performed by our company officers with the goal of developing policies for our Department.

1. What administrative functions do you feel that company officers absolutely must perform as a course of their normal duties?
2. What supervisory functions do you feel that company officers absolutely must perform as a course of their normal duties?
3. What are the remaining administrative and/or supervisory functions that you feel a company officer needs to perform?
4. Are there any administrative and/or supervisory functions not currently being performed by company officers that you feel should be? If so, elaborate.
5. Are there any administrative and/or supervisory functions currently being performed by company officers that you feel should not be? If so, elaborate.
6. In what administrative and supervisory areas, if any, do you feel that company officers need improvement?
7. Do you feel that our current policies are adequate to address the expected administrative and/or supervisory behaviors of company officers?
8. If you feel our policies are not adequate, do you have suggestions for their revision?
9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

## Appendix B

## Fire Department Interview Results (n=11)

1. What administrative functions do you feel that company officers absolutely must perform as a course of their normal duties?

- Enter Incident Reports (10)
- Enter daily journals (8)
- Document daily truck and equipment checks (6)
- Document training activities (6)
- Complete other records as required (4)
- Document that personnel have reported for work and are on duty (4)
- Complete injury reports (3)
- Documenting equipment maintenance (2)
- Documenting rental housing inspections (2)
- Documenting vehicle maintenance (2)
- Complete employee evaluations
- Daily shift briefing
- Daily safety meeting
- Enter FLSA paperwork
- Forward paperwork to supervisors
- Make sure all policies and procedures are fulfilled (2)
- Order parts
- Organize company level training
- Payroll
- Scheduling activities
- The accountability system
- The company officer must be accountable to the Chief
- The company officer must be accountable to their shift

2. What supervisory functions do you feel that company officers absolutely must perform as a course of their normal duties?

- Verify successful completion of tasks and activities (7)
- Supervise the crew during station duties (6)
- Assign tasks and activities (4)
- Assure readiness of equipment (3)
- Fireground supervision
- Identify department needs (2)
- Must understand the needs of the crew (2)
- Supervise the crew during training duties (2)
- Assure readiness of personnel
- Assure readiness of station
- Maintain discipline
- Maintain station and equipment

- Must listen
  - Operate as a team leader during incidents
  - Performance evaluations
  - Supervise daily truck and equipment checks
  - Supervising seasonal tasks
  - The company officer works for the crew as well as the boss
  - Time management
  - Train personnel
  - Verify that personnel have reported for and are on duty
3. What are the remaining administrative and/or supervisory functions that you feel a company officer needs to perform?
- Daily training or training (4)
  - None (2)
  - Daily tasks (2)
  - Overall supervision
  - Report to Fire Marshal and/or Training Director on rental housing inspections (2)
  - Report to Fire Marshal and/or Training Director on special projects (2)
  - Verify completion of payroll (2)
  - Handling human resources issues
  - Human resources issues
  - Make referrals as needed to answer questions
  - Motivating employees
  - Performance reviews
  - Set the agenda, vision, and expectations
  - Time management
  - Training
4. Are there any administrative and/or supervisory functions not currently being performed by company officers that you feel should be? If so, elaborate.
- Yes (7)
  - No (4)
  - Deliver training at the company level (4)
  - Incident reports (3)
  - Planning daily shift activities (3)
  - Assure readiness of equipment (2)
  - Input on setting goals & objectives for the crew (2)
  - Take ownership of their crew (2)
  - Accountability system
  - Assign tasks and activities
  - Assure readiness of personnel
  - Assure readiness of station

- Daily journal
  - Daily vehicle and equipment checks
  - Delivering training on company officer job functions
  - Developing proficiency in individual employees
  - Learn and teach policies
  - Input on the budget
  - Manage company inspections
  - Payroll
  - Perform company inspections and pre-plans jointly
  - Perform simple fire investigations
  - Relating how fire fighter job functions fit into the bigger picture
  - Station maintenance
  - Verify successful completion of tasks and activities
5. Are there any administrative and/or supervisory functions currently being performed by company officers that you feel should not be? If so, elaborate.
- No (10)
  - Yes
  - Too involved with the day-to-day operations of everything at Headquarters. The company officer runs more of the shift than the company
6. In what administrative and supervisory areas, if any, do you feel that company officers need improvement?
- Incident reporting (3)
  - Operating without daily administrative direction (3)
  - Taking ownership over their crew (3)
  - Assign tasks and activities (2)
  - Discipline (2)
  - Providing company level training (2)
  - Accountability system
  - Assure readiness of equipment and station
  - Assure readiness of personnel
  - Assign each company officer a unique area of responsibility
  - Completing preplans
  - Computer use skills
  - Daily journal
  - Daily vehicle and equipment checks
  - Documentation
  - Human resource management
  - Involve superior officers if unable to resolve employee problems
  - Involve superior officers if safety issues are unresolved
  - Involve superior officers more on employee injuries

- Mobile Data Computer use skills
  - Payroll
  - Peer reviews
  - Performance evaluations
  - Setting the vision and expectations
  - Verify successful completion of tasks and activities
7. Do you feel that our current policies are adequate to address the expected administrative and/or supervisory behaviors of company officers?
- No (9)
  - Yes (2)
8. If you feel our policies are not adequate, do you have suggestions for their revision?
- Concrete policies with input from current company officers
  - Define how two Stations, two Company Officers and one Assistant Chief/Shift Commander works for fill-in, sick, vacation, etc.
  - Develop our own policy (make sure it fits *our* needs)
  - Find what we do that's unique
  - First determine responsibilities and jobs, job descriptions and expectations. Then policies can follow. Trying the opposite does not work.
  - Georgetown auto backfill
  - Look at similar fire department policies
  - Look at what is outdated, prioritize our needs and address them in that order
  - More defined job descriptions, what's expected
  - Most are outdated and do not mirror the behavior we want to see
  - Multiple policies – Identify duplications and conflicts, revise to one policy
  - One person should write the policy, then the line supervisors review, then implement
  - Policy on bringing all in-service apparatus during lunch out of the station
  - The Chief should meet quarterly to review performance and set expectations. Everyone wants to know, "How am I doing?"
  - Write policies to keep as full-service an approach as possible at all times
9. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?
- None (8)
  - As a department you have to know the capabilities of your resources and not over-stretch. Focus on your core and expand if able.
  - Assume you are a company officer
  - Define how you want people to operate, then write the policies

- We have to do a better job of supervision and documenting what we've done and what data we want. The culture out there is changing and we need to change with it.
- Write all reports following NIMS and other standards

## Appendix C

Moorhead Fire Department  
2009 Applied Research Questionnaire Design

Company Officer Behaviors and Policies On-Line Questionnaire  
Distribution and data collection services provided by SurveyMonkey®

## Page 1. Instructions

I'm collecting specific data for my Executive Fire Officer paper that can be used for statistical analysis. Thank you for taking the time to help me with my research. Expected time to complete this questionnaire is 5 - 10 minutes.

I've broken down many of the administrative and supervisory tasks that our department performs. Here is what I'm trying to determine:

1. Should this behavior or task be performed or managed at the Company Officer Level?
2. If this behavior or task is being done, is it being performed well at this time or is improvement needed?
3. Are the policies that are in place for that task or behavior adequate?
4. If the policies that are in place for that task or behavior are not adequate, what is wrong?

*NOTE: The behavioral elements in the sections that follow in italics were measured on four different dimensions. The four dimensions and the possible answers are as follows:*

*Should be Performed?*

*Yes.*

*No.*

*How is Performance?*

*Performed well*

*Needs Improvement*

*Not performed at all*

*Policies Adequate?*

*Yes*

*No*

*If no, What's the Biggest Problem?*

*No policies exist*

*Policies outdated*

*Multiple conflicting policies*

*Other*



Page 2. Human Resource Management

1. This section deals with Human Resource Management skills for the company officer, or how they manage people and the work they do. The first behavior, (Applies H.R. Policies) means processing payroll, vacation, sick leave, shift trades, scheduling, etc.)

*Applies H. R. Policies*  
*Manages Daily Tasks*  
*Manages Conflict*  
*Conducts Disciplinary Actions*  
*Handles Grievances*  
*Evaluates Job Performance*  
*Establishing Goals and Objectives*

If you said “Other” regarding the “biggest problem,” please specify.

Page 3. Community and Government Relations

2. This section deals with how the company officer interacts with the public or other government officials.

*Answers Requests for Information*  
*Responds to Complaints*

If you said “Other” regarding the “biggest problem,” please specify.

Page 4. Administration

3. This section deals with how the company officer interacts with the public or other government officials.

*Completes incident reports*  
*Completes other daily records*  
*Manages the station budget*

If you said “Other” regarding the “biggest problem,” please specify.

Page 5. Fire Prevention and Life Safety

4. This section deals with how the company officer works with life safety tasks at their station.

*Manages rental housing inspections*  
*Manages commercial fire inspections*

*Develops pre-plans*  
*Performs initial fire investigations*  
*Conducts public education session (tours and presentations)*

If you said “Other” regarding the “biggest problem,” please specify.

#### Page 6. Health and Safety

5. This section deals with how the company officer works with safety related issues.

*Applies the safety rules to employees*  
*Investigates accidents*  
*Promoted wellness programs*

If you said “Other” regarding the “biggest problem,” please specify.

#### Page 7. Training

6. This section deals with how the company officer conducts training for the crew at his or her own station.

*Determines training needs*  
*Delivers training programs*  
*Documents training activities*

If you said “Other” regarding the “biggest problem,” please specify.

#### Page 8. General Information

7. When considering our policies as a whole, how do you feel about them, generally speaking? (Check all that apply)

They are adequate  
They are outdated  
There are multiple policies that conflict with one another

8. Which of the following best describes your current rank?

Chief Officer (Assistant Chief or Chief of Department)  
Company Officer (Captain or Lieutenant)  
Prospective Officer (Hope to be a Captain or Lieutenant soon)

9. Any final comments you wish to share?

### 3. Community and Government Relations

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2. This section deals with how the company officer interacts with the public or other government officials.

## Should be Performed?

Answers requests for information

## Responds to Complaints

If you said "Other" regarding the "biggest problem," please specify.

## How is Performance?

## Policies Adequate?

**If no, What's the biggest problem?**

Add Question Here

Add Page Here

## Appendix D – Questionnaire Results (n=11)

[illegible]

**If you said "Other" regarding the "biggest problem," please specify.**

**If you said "Other" regarding the "biggest problem," please specify.**



**If you said "Other" regarding the "biggest problem," please specify.**

1. Again lack of consistency among shifts, timing and enforcement authority needs to be reevaluated

2. These are all functions that could be done by the company officer, but currently are not. If it is the intent of the department to go that way policies need to be put in place first.

3. We all could improve on the documenting of training reports.

**if you said "Other" regarding the "biggest problem," please specify.**

### 1. Conflicting policies about physical fitness importance and time during shift

2. Training should be given for investigating accidents. Wellness is not a policy at this time so it is done on a personal bases rather than a department policy.

Training	Should be Performed?		How is Performance?			Policies Adequate?		If no, what's the biggest problem?			
	Yes	No	Performed Well	Needs Improvement	Not Performed at All	Yes	No	No Policies Exist	Policies outdated	Multiple Conflicting Policies	Other
Determines training needs	81.8% (9)	18.2% (2)	18.2% (2)	81.8% (9)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	81.8% (9)	77.8% (7)	11.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	11.1% (1)
Delivers training programs	90.9% (10)	9.1% (1)	27.3% (3)	63.6% (7)	9.1% (1)	20.0% (2)	80.0% (8)	100.0% (9)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)
Documents training activities	100.0% (11)	0.0% (0)	36.4% (4)	54.5% (6)	9.1% (1)	36.4% (4)	63.6% (7)	83.3% (5)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	16.7% (1)

**If you said "Other" regarding the "biggest problem," please specify.**

1. Need guidance as a department on training focus and objectives, not the crapshoot at 8am every morning. Need to get CO on same page, and shifts to same skill levels
2. Some of these areas need policies written, others need to be revised, then the company officer needs to be trained in regards to these policies.
2. Training should be given for investigating accidents. Wellness is not a policy at this time so it is done on a personal bases rather than a department policy.

### General Information

When considering our policies as a whole, how do you feel about them, generally speaking? (Check all that apply)	They are adequate	45.5% (5)
	They are outdated	54.5% (6)
	There are multiple policies that conflict with one another	45.5% (5)

Which of the following best describes your current rank?	Chief Officer (Assistant Chief or Chief if Department)	45.5% (5)
	Company Officer (Captain or Lieutenant)	27.3% (3)
	Prospective Officer (Hope to be a Captain or Lieutenant soon)	27.3% (3)

### Any final comments you wish to share?

1. "In 2 weeks they will forgot what they said, and thing will go back to the way they were." Jerry Shawstead, FF extraordinaire (retired)
2. For the most part our policies are adequate, some revision is needed.
3. Our current policies are adequate at best, but certainly in need of review and updating.
4. be safe
5. I FEEL THE CAPTAINS SHOULD HAVE A SAY IN AND BE INVOLVED WITH A LOT OF THE THINGS LISTED, BUT SHOULD NOT BE IN CHARGE OF THEM.
6. Department model of delivery has changed recently without the policies being updated. As the development of the new model continues policies should be developed quickly to keep up with the progress.